

January 2, 1960

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT  
December 3, 1959



Others present:

Secretary Herter, Mr. Eaton  
(for first part of meeting),  
General Goodpaster

Mr. Herter said he feels the government is fortunate to have Mr. Eaton to head up our delegation to the disarmament negotiations. The President said it is a very difficult task to find the directions in which we should work for disarmament. He thought the disarmament objective proposed by Mr. Coolidge at a recent NSC meeting is quite good. He is inclined to think that we cannot limit ourselves to a package plan, but must negotiate every fruitful lead.

The President, after further discussion, assured Mr. Eaton he was delighted that the latter had taken on this task. At this point Mr. Eaton left the meeting.

The President said he had liked very much the discussion in the NSC concerning the "countries that can pay their way." He thought Mr. Dillon had done an excellent job in making clear which countries could do this and which could not. He said he thinks most highly of Mr. Dillon, and also likes the work of Assistant Secretary Irwin of Defense. Mr. Herter said it has been fine to have Mr. Irwin in Defense. The State Department is working very well with the Defense Department these days.

Mr. Herter then reviewed the status of preparations for the Western summit and NATO meetings. He is getting no cooperation from the French at all. They say they have no instructions on simple procedural questions pertaining to the summit such as date, place, agenda, etc. The President commented that General de Gaulle is a man who does not know how to delegate. At the same time, he is only approachable by someone on his same level.

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NSC Letter 115/81  
1/16/51  
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in government. The result is to slow things up.

The President asked if there is any intimation of anything we could do with respect to Berlin. He noted that up to recently we have been insisting on reunification of Germany. He said he thought we ought to have some sensible alternative to this. Mr. Herter said that the previous day Adenauer and de Gaulle had made a public statement that there would be no separate agreement on Berlin. It appears as though they are agreeing on policy without a U. S. representative being present. We have been doing some work carrying forward the results of the negotiations at Geneva on the German question, attempting to set forth some interim arrangements for Berlin. For the longer range, a guaranteed city may be the right solution. Regarding Germany, as a whole we are thinking of proposing a vote in East and West Germany, asking each whether they want a separate treaty or reunification. He thought we could get the Germans to agree that if this is done they will give up their claims to areas beyond the Oder-Neisse. The President thought there should be a third question -- whether they prefer to preserve the status quo, with Berlin as it now is. Mr. Herter thought we should try to settle the status of Berlin separately.



The President recalled Khrushchev's assertion that Adenauer does not want reunification. However, he thought neither Adenauer nor de Gaulle could refuse the proposal for a plebiscite. If the French and the Germans insist on maintaining the status quo, we should tell them they must take the responsibility for it. If the U. S. and British troops leave the continent, our whole collective security position would be broken up. He asked how West Berlin would fit into this plebiscite, and Mr. Herter said we have taken the position that Berlin is a problem separate from East and West Germany. The President said he is getting rather weary of the frozen attitudes taken by the French and the Germans.

Mr. Herter next took up the question of disarmament. The negotiations on test suspension are of course a phase of this. In addition, there is considerable interest in the so-called Norstad plan, which

proposes to begin by establishing inspection over forces in prescribed areas of Western Europe. Mr. Herter said that he had had his group of consultants on disarmament convened recently to go over these subjects as well as the Coolidge proposal. Mr. McCloy in particular had not liked the Norstad plan, since he said it sounded like disengagement. Mr. Herter, however, thought the Germans might accept it if it were stated in terms of coordinates rather than country boundaries.

Referring next to the NATO meeting, Mr. Herter showed the President an outline of the remarks he planned to make. In addition, he mentioned the proposal for a special committee to make a ten-year study for NATO, covering both military and political questions. The President suggested that the Secretary put somewhere in his remarks that the fruition of the Marshall Plan has brought about a situation even better than we anticipated, and we are delighted with it. As a result, however, there is now an added responsibility on the part of the European countries to shoulder more of the burden themselves. Mr. Herter said he would incorporate these remarks in his speech. He mentioned that Secretary Anderson will also be speaking.

The President then discussed briefly with Secretary Herter a paper he had received from John D. Rockefeller concerning technical aid activities in India.

I then took up several matters with the President and the Secretary of State. The first was the question whether Colonel Walters should be assigned to a post in Rio de Janeiro. I indicated that no one seemed to be recommending this, and that Walters would prefer some other assignment. The President and the Secretary of State both said they were not pressing this and that I could drop any further consideration of that assignment.

The next question had to do with the Chairmanship of the OCB. The experience with Mr. Murphy as Chairman indicated that he, as the number three man in the State Department, with economic matters in the hands of the number two man in the State Department, was not in position to function as effectively as when the number two man had been Chairman. After discussion the President said he thought that probably the best solution would be

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NSC Letter 11/5/61  
11/16/61

to have Gordon Gray serve as impartial Chairman. Mr. Herter said this would be most agreeable to him, and that the State Department has carried the burden of the Chairmanship for some time but is quite ready to turn it over. The President thought the best solution might be not to use a department head for the chairmanship, in order that the Chairman may be "disinterested." He did not think that Mr. Harr was as yet broadly enough experienced to take the chairmanship.

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A. J. Goodpaster  
Brigadier General, USA

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